



CITY OF TAUNTON PATHWAYS COMMITTEE

*Taunton City Hall
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*Phillip Duarte
Chair*

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MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, September 4, 2019 @ 7:00pm Municipal Council Chambers ~ Temporary City Hall 141 Oak St. ~ Taunton, MA 02780

Meeting called to order at 7:22pm by Phillip Duarte

Members Present:

Phillip Duarte
Jonathan Gray
Deb Levesque
Madeline Silva
Will Mendonca
Scott Martin
Eric Andrade - Mass in Motion
Bill Napolitano - SRPEDD

Members Not Present:

Karen Letendre
James Dufresne
Dick Shafer
Jake McNamara

Public Input: *None*

Reports:

Update from the Chair

- Update on FLAP Grant
 - Unfortunately, our application for the Taunton River Trail was not recommended for programming under the Massachusetts Federal Lands Access Program during this funding round. **See letter from the Massachusetts Programming Decisions Committee attached.**
 - The available funding for Massachusetts (\$750,000) was all awarded to Nantucket because their project was shovel-ready. Although our project had been ranked first

during the review process, it was ultimately bumped down because we have not completed all of our right-of-way acquisitions.

- Our new goal is to complete our right-of-way acquisitions by the end of the year. Bill anticipates that the next Call for Projects will be in September with a month for submittals. If that is the case, we would want to have all of the easements in place by the time the applications are reviewed.
- Update on West Water Street Easement
 - Brown, Richardson, and Rowe had asked us to pause our work on the West Water Street easement eminent domain taking until the NEPA Categorical Exclusion Checklist was completed.
 - Because we did not receive the FLAP grant, they have given us the go-ahead to proceed with the eminent domain taking. Attorney de Abreu is in the process of hiring an appraiser to complete the appraisal of the necessary taking.
 - Once the appraisal is completed, we will return to the City Council to request their approval of the taking.
- Norton/Mansfield Rail-Trail Extension Design Public Hearing
 - MassDOT held a design public hearing for Norton/Mansfield Rail-Trail extension on August 15th. There was a good turnout, including many of their town and state elected officials. Most of the audience members were supporters of the trail.
 - The project is currently approaching 75% design and the design will hopefully be completed by the end of the year. It is programmed in the state's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY22.
- Somerset Complete Streets
 - Somerset received a \$400,000 Complete Streets grant in the most recent funding round for a segment of Riverside Ave. from Bourn Ave. to Marble St. (~0.5 miles) for sidewalks, bike lanes, and raised crosswalks.
 - Additional sidewalks beyond that stretch will be replaced using town funding.
 - This is important because Riverside Ave. is an on-road section of the full Taunton River Trail. Bill has ordered the signage for the trail and hopefully Somerset will erect the signs on their on-road section.

Subcommittee Updates

- Advocacy: None
- Marketing: None
- Outreach: None

Old Business:

Neighborhood Walk-Through

- Our Committee neighborhood walk-through of Phase 1 of the trail will occur on **Sunday, September 22nd, at 1:00pm.**
 - Park and meet at the Weir Village Riverfront Park.

New Business:

Review of Whittenton Walk Audit

- This walk audit was done as a partnership between Mass in Motion and the City's Office of Economic and Community Development in order to assist with the MassWorks grant for the Whittenton area.
- **See document attached.**

TMLP Commission Presentation

- At the last meeting with TMLP, Ken Goulart asked that the design team do a presentation for the TMLP Commission about the project. Phil has emailed Ken to set this up for their October meeting and is waiting to hear back.

PNF for Mass Historical Commission

- We received a letter from the State Historic Preservation Officer at the Massachusetts Historical Commission in response to our Project Notification Form (PNF) that was filed by Stantec. **See letter from the Massachusetts Historical Commission attached.**
- The Commission will be performing an archaeological sensitivity review for the project. The railroad bed is a disturbed area and will likely not be a problem. The wooded area where we come off the railroad bed to go around the TMLP plant may have historically significant spots, but the Commission and the relevant parties will provide guidance on our plans moving forward.

Westville Conservation Area

- A resident reached out to Phil to let him know that the trails at the Westville Conservation Area are completely overgrown and impassable.
- **Motion to send a letter to the Parks, Cemeteries, and Public Grounds Department to ask them to clear the trails that are supposed to be there. Motion passes.**

Announcements:

- Next Meeting:
Wednesday, October 2, 2019 @ 7:00pm
Municipal Council Chambers ~ Temporary City Hall
141 Oak St. ~ Taunton, MA 02780

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm by Phillip Duarte